



## MEDIA RELEASE

# Fight ramps up for MRI service in New England

18 Feb 2019

Member for New England, Barnaby Joyce, is maintaining the pressure to secure more MRI services in the region following recent expansion of the funding program.

The first 10 locations to receive new Medicare-supported MRI licences were announced late last year with a further 20 earmarked for announcement soon.

This month a further \$150 million in Coalition Government funding was made available for the scheme, bringing the total investment to \$375 million over the forward estimates and delivering 50 MRI licences nationally.

“It is vitally important that everyone has access to this life-saving technology here in the New England,” Mr Joyce said.

“That is why I’m working closely with the Minister for Health, Greg Hunt, to secure an MRI licence for local people here in our region.

“The MRI technology is already available at Tamworth Hospital with a new MRI machine installed there recently, and I am fighting to make sure this service is available to not only hospital in-patients but everyone who needs it.”

Magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) is a commonly used medical scan which gives a detailed view of the soft tissues of the body such as muscles, ligaments, brain tissue, discs and blood vessels. It is used by doctors to diagnose and monitor a number of different medical conditions including cancer and trauma or sporting injuries.

Medicare spending is guaranteed and increasing every year from approximately \$24 billion in 2017?18 to \$28.8 billion in 2021?22. The Liberal National Government has also announced an additional \$2 billion investment in diagnostic imaging over the next decade.

The Coalition Government is retaining the bulk-billing incentive and indexing targeted diagnostic imaging services including mammography, fluoroscopy, CT scans and interventional procedures. By contrast, Labor has only committed \$80 million and not made any commitment to the re-indexation of diagnostic imaging rebates.

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Hon **Barnaby Joyce** MP

FEDERAL MEMBER FOR NEW ENGLAND

More information about the MRI licensing application process is available at:  
<http://www.health.gov.au/diagnosticimaging>

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